



Article Type: Research Paper

## Boosting Kembang Kuning Tourism Village's Visibility: Strategies for Effective Tourism Marketing in East Lombok Regency

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**Abstract:** This research explores how to strengthen the positioning of Kembang Kuning Tourism Village, a classified advanced tourist village in the East Lombok Regency, in terms of its marketing strategy in the current era of the digital and sharing economy. The village has natural and cultural attractions, such as waterfalls, rice fields, and traditional coffee and coconut oil-making processes. Despite its awards and recognition, Kembang Kuning Tourism Village has a low profile among tourists, and many tourists assume it is part of the adjacent Tete Batu tourist village. The research uses interviews, observations, and documentation to analyze the indicators of programming and promotion based on the theory of marketing mix. The results reveal that the village has several annual events as part of its programming, but socialization activities have not been carried out. Kembang Kuning Tourism Village has social media and its own media accounts, but they have not yet utilized other media channels such as paid media and endorsers. The research suggests that Kembang Kuning Tourism Village should focus on promoting its unique selling proposition and positioning itself as a distinct tourist village to increase its awareness among tourists. The research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the challenges faced by a tourist village in terms of its positioning and proposing strategies to strengthen its position in the tourism market

**Keywords:** positioning, tourism marketing, tourism village

**JEL Classification:** M31, L38



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### THIS ARTICLE IS AVAILABLE IN:

<https://pkp.stpmataram.com/index.php/ATS/index>

DOI: 10.47492/ats.v1i1.5

**CITATION:** Salmiati, W., Martayadi, U. (2023). Boosting Kembang Kuning Tourism Village's Visibility: Strategies for Effective Tourism Marketing in East Lombok Regency. *Advances in Tourism Studies*, 1(1), p.1-7.



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## Introduction

Tourism has become an important economic sector in many countries around the world, including Indonesia (Giaoutzi & Nijkamp, 2017). The country is blessed with a diverse range of natural and cultural attractions that have the potential to attract millions of tourists every year (Buhalis & Foerste, 2015). One of the regions in Indonesia that is rich in natural and cultural attractions is East Lombok Regency, which is located on the eastern side of the island of Lombok.

One of the sub-districts in East Lombok Regency that has been designated as a tourist village is Sikur. The Sikur sub-district is home to several tourist villages that have been classified according to the West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Regional Regulation in 2020 regarding the implementation of tourist villages. One of these villages is Kembang Kuning, which has been classified as an advanced tourist village (Regional Regulation of West Nusa Tenggara Province No. 3 of 2020, 2020).

Kembang Kuning Village is an area with enormous potential for tourism development (Ratmaja & Pattaray, 2019). It is located in a strategic location that is surrounded by beautiful natural attractions such as the Sarang Walet waterfall, Pancor Kapang waterfall, Lingko' Cave waterfall, and rice fields. The village not only offers a charming panorama of rice fields under the Rinjani mountain but also provides various daily activities for its residents, such as traditional coffee and coconut oil-making processes.

Despite its potential, Kembang Kuning tourist village faces several challenges in terms of marketing and positioning. One of the main challenges is that many tourists are not aware of the village as a tourist destination, and those who come to the area often confuse it with Tete Batu tourist village, which is adjacent to Kembang Kuning tourist village. Therefore, it is essential to explore ways to strengthen the positioning of Kembang Kuning tourist village in East Lombok Regency tourism marketing to attract more visitors and improve the area's economic growth.

In today's digital and sharing economy era, tourist village managers can take steps to market their villages effectively (Hall, 2009; Kolb, 2006). These steps include identifying tourism products and building a Unique Selling Proposition (USP), identifying target markets, building positioning, creating identity (brand), establishing pricing strategies, building distribution channels, and implementing marketing communication (Benur & Bramwell, 2015). The ability of managers to create the desired perceptions of the tourist village, tourist perceptions, and competitor perceptions is crucial for the success of positioning (Buhalis, 2004).

This study aims to explore the challenges faced by the Kembang Kuning Tourism Village in terms of its positioning and propose strategies that can be used to strengthen its position. The research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by identifying steps that can be taken by tourism village managers to market the village effectively and develop a good image to become more widely known as a tourist destination. The findings of this study will provide practical recommendations for tourism stakeholders in East Lombok Regency and beyond, which will help to boost tourism growth in the area and improve the welfare of local communities

## Research Method

In this study, a combination of research methods was employed to gather and analyze data. Three techniques were utilized: interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the subjects of the study to obtain data and information by asking questions and engaging in discussions. Observations were carried out to gather information by observing the object of study. Documentation was used to collect data that had already been archived.

The subjects of the study were selected using purposive sampling, a technique that involves selecting individuals who meet certain criteria (Campbell et al., 2020). This method was chosen to ensure that the selected subjects are knowledgeable and experienced in the research topic and can provide relevant and valuable insights.

The data collected were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive analysis method. This method involves analyzing the data by transforming it into written prose and linking it with other data to obtain a clear understanding of the truth or to strengthen existing descriptions. The aim of this analysis was to provide a detailed and in-depth understanding of the research topic.

The research method employed in this study is appropriate for obtaining in-depth information about the research topic and for generating new insights. By combining different research techniques, the study was able to gather rich and diverse data, which was analyzed using a rigorous and systematic method. The findings of this study are expected to contribute

to the existing body of knowledge on the research topic and provide insights that can inform future research and practice.

This study adheres to ethical principles and guidelines for research involving human subjects. All participants provided informed consent and their confidentiality and anonymity have been protected throughout the research process. Any potential risks and benefits of the study have been carefully considered and minimized, and the results will be used for academic purposes only. Any conflicts of interest have been disclosed and addressed appropriately.

## **Result and Discussion**

The results of this research suggest that while Kembang Kuning Tourist Village has already implemented several programming and promotion activities, there are still areas for improvement to strengthen its positioning as a tourist destination. The lack of socialization activities, which are part of their programming, may be hindering their potential to attract more tourists. This finding is supported by previous studies that have shown that socialization is an essential aspect of marketing and can help to create brand awareness and interest among potential visitors (Rizwan & Ahmad, 2019; Verhulst et al., 2020).

In terms of promotion, the use of paid media and endorsers is critical to introduce and strengthen the positioning of Kembang Kuning Tourist Village to foreign tourists, who are their target market. However, the research findings suggest that funding constraints have prevented them from using these media channels. This is consistent with previous studies that have shown that lack of funding is a common challenge faced by small tourism destinations (Badriati et al., 2022; Fansuri & Latiff, 2022; Hjalager & Andersen, 2001; Santos-Lacueva et al., 2018). Therefore, it is crucial for Kembang Kuning Tourist Village to explore alternative funding sources and consider cost-effective options for endorsers, such as micro-influencers or local celebrities.

Furthermore, the research findings also highlight the importance of using a mix of media channels to promote a tourist destination, including owned media, shared media, and earned media. Owned media, such as social media and websites, can help to maintain the relationship with existing visitors, while shared media, such as user-generated content, can help to increase brand exposure and engagement. Earned media, such as media coverage and reviews, can also help to build credibility and trust among potential visitors (Flores-Ruiz et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2020; Paul et al., 2019).

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights into the programming and promotion strategies of Kembang Kuning Tourist Village. The findings suggest that socialization and the use of alternative funding sources and cost-effective endorsers are essential for strengthening the positioning of the tourist destination. Additionally, using a mix of media channels can help to increase brand exposure, engagement, and credibility. These insights can be useful for other small tourism destinations facing similar challenges and can contribute to the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

Based on the findings of the research, some recommendations that Kembang Kuning Tourist Village could consider to improve its positioning include: implementing socialization activities - Kembang Kuning Tourist Village should consider developing a socialization plan that includes activities to create awareness and interest among potential visitors. This could include outreach to travel agencies, tourism organizations, and local businesses to promote the village as a tourist destination; exploring alternative funding sources - To expand its promotional efforts, Kembang Kuning Tourist Village could explore partnerships with local businesses or government agencies to obtain funding or seek out grants from tourism organizations. This could help alleviate the funding constraints that have prevented them from using paid media or endorsers; utilizing micro-influencers or local celebrities - Kembang Kuning Tourist Village could consider using micro-influencers or local celebrities to endorse their tourist village. This could be a more cost-effective option than using high-profile

celebrities or influencers and could still have a significant impact on attracting visitors; utilizing paid media - While funding is currently a constraint, Kembang Kuning Tourist Village should still consider utilizing paid media to introduce and strengthen its positioning to foreign tourists. This could include using television channels abroad, such as Discovery Channel, National Geographic Channel, or TripAdvisor, as well as online platforms such as Google and Baidu.

By implementing these recommendations, Kembang Kuning Tourist Village could potentially attract more visitors and strengthen its positioning as a tourist destination. It is important to note that these recommendations are not an exhaustive list, and Kembang Kuning Tourist Village should conduct further research and analysis to determine the most effective strategies for their specific needs and circumstances.

## Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the steps that can be taken by tourism village managers to market their village in the current era of the digital and sharing economy to develop a good image and become more widely known as a tourist destination. The research also aimed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the challenges faced by the Kembang Kuning Tourism Village in terms of its positioning and proposing strategies that can be used to strengthen its position.

The findings of the study indicate that Kembang Kuning Tourist Village has potential natural and cultural attractions, but many tourists are not aware of the village as a tourist destination. The village has already taken steps to strengthen its positioning through programming and promotion indicators based on the marketing mix theory. However, the village still faces challenges in terms of socialization activities, utilization of paid media, and the development of identity.

The findings of the study imply that tourism village managers need to focus on strengthening the programming and promotion indicators based on the marketing mix theory to improve their village's positioning. The village needs to conduct more socialization activities to increase awareness of the village as a tourist destination. The village should also consider utilizing paid media to reach a wider audience and develop a unique identity that differentiates it from other tourist villages.

The study has several limitations that need to be addressed. The research was conducted in only one tourism village in East Lombok Regency, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The study also relied on qualitative data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, which may limit the validity of the findings.

Future research can focus on exploring the challenges faced by other tourism villages in Indonesia and developing strategies to improve their positioning. Future studies can also use a quantitative research approach to validate the findings of this study. Additionally, future research can explore the effectiveness of utilizing paid media and developing a unique identity in improving the positioning of tourism villages.

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